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THE NEWLY-ESTABLISHED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN TEACHER EDUCATION.

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A REPORT WAS MADE OF THE FIRST 2 MONTHS OF OPERATION OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN TEACHER EDUCATION. THE PROGRAM OF THIS CENTER WAS PLANNED TO USE A PARTNERSHIP OF EDUCATIONAL TALENT AND EXPERIENCE TO PROVIDE A FOLLOW-THROUGH WHICH CAN MAKE CREATIVE IDEAS IN EDUCATION BECOME REALITIES IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS RATHER THAN JUST MATERIAL FOR LIBRARY SHELVES. RESEARCHERS, PRACTITIONERS, SUBJECT-MATTER EXPERTS, EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SPECIALISTS, SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGISTS, EXPERTS IN LEARNING AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES, ANTHROPOLOGISTS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND TEACHERS WERE BEING ORGANIZED AS A TEAM TO EVALUATE OLD AND NEW APPROACHES TO EDUCATION. THE CHILD STUDIES, SOCIOCULTURAL STUDIES, AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY DIVISIONS OF THE CENTER WILL BE CONCERNED WITH THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION FROM THE STANDPOINT OF CHILD AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, LEARNING AND MOTIVATION, AND SOCIOCULTURAL INFLUENCES ALONG WITH PROVIDING RESEARCH CONSULTATION AND EVALUATION. THE EXPERIMENTAL TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT AND COUNSELING DIVISIONS WILL BE CARRYING OUT A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS RANGING FROM INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS OF TEACHER EDUCATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CURRICULUM IN SCIENCE. THE DISSEMINATION, EDUCATIONAL MEDIA AND MATERIALS, EDUCATIONAL RADIO AND TELEVISION, AND IN-SERVICE EDUCATION DIVISIONS WILL BE CONCERNED WITH VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DISSEMINATING THE IDEAS, PROGRAMS, AND MATERIALS WHICH ARE DEVELOPED BY THE CENTER. THIS IS AN ABSTRACT OF AN ADDRESS PRESENTED TO THE CONFERENCE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS TEACHING, AUSTIN, OCTOBER 30, 1965. (GD)

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THE NEWLY-ESTABLISHED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Abstract of an Address presented to the Conference for the Advancement of Science and Mathematics Teaching, Austin, Texas, October 30, 1965 by Oliver H. Bown, Ph.D., Associate Director for Research, Research and Development Center in Teacher Education.

The many new programs designed to improve and enrich the educational process at all levels and to test and evaluate the effects of new curricular materials and instructional approaches are likely, for a time, at least, to confuse the general public as well as those of us who are within the field of Education. However difficult it may be to understand and keep straight the various programs supported by Federal and State government, private foundations and local school districts, one thing is clear: Society is beginning to invest substantially increased interest and dollars in the educational process. As much as our nation must rely on the contribution which education makes in the development of our young people, it seems only appropriate that these evidences of increased responsibility for the improvement of our educational system are appearing. I take these developments as an indication that we are moving rapidly from the era in which the criticism of education became almost a national past-time to an era in which we will mobilize the necessary resources in dollars and brains to solve some of the tremendously complex problems and to fulfill the enormous potentialities of our massive educational system.

The Research and Development Center in Teacher Education commenced operation less than two months ago. It is funded by a grant under Title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 as amended, of approximately 3 million dollars for its first five years of operation. In addition, it is supported by a significant amount of local contribution from the University of Texas, and very importantly, through the contribution of top-level talent from

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all colleges within the University, the Texas Education Agency and the Austin Public Schools. In the coming years, additional universities, colleges and school systems will be joining the Center's operations in the contribution of ideas, personnel and programs of action and research. This Center is one of nine such national centers over the country, each assuming major responsibility for different areas of development and Research in education. Communication among centers will hopefully be maximized so that every area of the country will have direct access in depth to the progress made in each of the centers. While much could be said about the potential contribution of such centers to our evolving educational system, it is of central importance that such centers are equipped to support relatively large scale and comprehensive programs of innovation and research over a relatively long time span rather than being limited to more narrowly focussed projects which most often are addressed to one microscopic aspect of the total educational process ignoring many other important variables which may be affecting the designated area simultaneously.

It is anticipated that the efforts of the Research and Development Centers will soon be supplemented by the establishment of Regional Laboratories. These laboratories will be truly regional in character involving most often several states with certain common geographical, cultural and educational characteristics. Among other things, the laboratories will serve as arms of the Research and Development Centers in the massive task of disseminating the best of the ideas, programs and materials developed through research and rigorous field testing.

While the Research and Development Center in Austin is in one sense in its infancy, it will draw immediately from the work of many individual projects, departments, centers and studies which have been in progress at the University, in public schools, and in the State Department of Education over the past

decade. By coordinating, and in some instances integrating, the work of previously separate undertakings, many more of the important influences on the learner will be studied simultaneously. A considerable increase in the efficiency of educational innovation and research is anticipated. The researcher and the practitioner, the subject matter expert, the educational media specialist and the professional teacher-educator, the social psychologist, the expert in learning and cognitive process and the anthropologist, the experienced administrator and the master teacher will form a team to evalute old and new approaches in education. The continuing cooperation of many minds and points of view confronting the challenge of increasing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the educational process is a very significant factor in the impact which R & D Centers will have. It is also significant that a continuing center of this kind, formulating policy and being administered by University, education agency and public school personnel, will enter into a mutually guided and enduring relationship with the public schools living with the reality of the school situation in a way which more limited projects were unable to accomplish. This partnership of educational talent and experience is likely to provide the follow-through which can make the most creative ideas in education realities in the public schools rather than just material for library shelves.

The divisional structure within the R & D Center provides a very rough conception of the various major responsibilities which the Center is assuming. The divisions of Child Studies, Socio-Cultural Studies and Research Methodology are concerned with the behavioral science foundations of education from the standpoint of child and human development, learning and motivation, socio-cultural influences and in providing research consultation to all divisions and programs to the end of insuring that rigorous evaluation of all programs is

accomplished. The Experimental Teaching and Assessment and Counseling Divisions are carrying on a variety of programs ranging from an extensive program revamping the professional education of teachers in the direction of individualizing the various learnings and experiences which make up the professional preparation of the prospective teacher to experiments in team-teaching aimed toward the most effective utilization of the subject matter concentration of different teachers to the development of an entirely new curriculum in science which involves a good many innovations in teaching methodology.

Another group of divisions, Dissemination, Educational Media and Materials, Educational Radio and Television, and In-Service Education, is concerned with various aspects of disseminating the ideas, programs and materials which are developed within the Center. They are particularly equipped to deal with dissemination as a process which deserves considerable study in itself. We need to know much more about why some of the best ideas and materials and most successful practices are sometimes unknown and often untried in many schools.

As ambitious as the R & D Center is in its hope to have real impact on educational practice in this state and in the country, its programs are permeated with one important theme which I think it may be important to make explicit. Large scale undertakings in any field often imply the development of a unitary program, procedure or model which will then become the standard to which confirmity is expected. If for no other reason, our previous work leaves us with deep respect for the individuality of teachers, students, school systems and communities, and it is only as we are able to understand and work to provide the conditions which facilitate the constructive development

of individual strengths, abilities and points of view, will we really be fulfilling our purpose in education. We do not believe there is one kind of effective teacher; we know that there are many. We are not enamored with any one teaching method or "teacher personality" or organization of curriculum or administrative style. It is in an effort to work with the enormous diversity of individuals who in one role or another make up the totality of the educational system that the R & D Center is dedicated.